

A SAVIOR IS BORN

How to Worship the Savior

Part 2

Merry Christmas everybody!

We are right in the middle of the Christmas season.
I thought I'd start by asking you
what are some of your favorite things about Christmas.

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All those things are great – But really
I believe this is a season to learn to worship

Worship?

To a lot of us worship sounds, if we're honest, *boring*.
But actually, Worship is wonderful and rewarding
And I like to help you enjoy worship

If you think of your life like a big map.
There's the "You are here" arrow
And there is this destination over here called "Worship."
It's this place that we want to get to
where we know there's a sense of peace.
We know there's a sense of confidence.
We know here's a sense of hope.

So how do you get from where you are to this place of worship?

some of the first worshippers give us some great examples
They knew how to find Jesus.
They came all the way from the east,

to find Jesus and to worship him.
They were called the wise men.
We're going to let them show us how to worship.

First let's read Matthew 2:1-12
Slides 2-9

Now, let's let these wise men
sort of guide us on this journey of worship.
Hear what they have to say
Six parts of worship that we learn from the wise men.

1. START WITH A SINCERE DESIRE.

First thing, is you have to start with a sincere desire.
It may sound too simple to say
but if you don't want to worship
you're not going to worshipthat's the way it is.
You have to want it.
Worship is not going to burst into your life
You've got to go to him.

The Bible says in *Matthew 2:1*
"The Magi from the east came to Jerusalem."
Who were these guys?

The Maji were political advisors.
They had expertise in science and agriculture
and math and history and astronomy and religion.
And because of this
they were sort of the power behind the power.

They were the power behind the power.
They had heard that there was a king to be born,
And so they came to worship him.
Not just to see him but to worship him.
It was a journey of months and months,
a very expensive, costly journey
to walk all the way from the east
to see this new king
and it indicates more than just some intellectual curiosity.
These guys were hungry to see this new King

Now when you think of worship,
one of the parts of worship is this desire,
this wanting it in our lives.

How does this work with worship?

One of the mistakes we make is
we have a spiritual need
and we try to fulfill it in a physical way.

What are these spiritual needs that I'm talking about?
How do you know that you're hungry inside?

It's when you feel *empty* inside.
I need something to fulfill me.
It's when you feel separate or lonely inside.
That's a spiritual hunger.
It's when you feel this need for hope inside
or a need for significance.
At your job, in your relationships.
Those are all spiritual hungers.

The truth of the matter is
That empty feeling is telling you
there's this spiritual hunger in your life.
And that need is met through worship.

So, for just a few moments now
I invite you to join us

Right now in your mind
just recognize this desire that you have
and that a God is the one who can meet this desire.
So, in your mind you or say
“God, I need your presence to fulfill my need

When you do that needs are met in your life
at deeper levels than you can imagine.

That's the first thing these guys teach us.

There's a second thing they teach us about worship.
Is to

2. BE IN EXPECTANCY

You expect Jesus to show up. You expect God to show up.

This is the faith factor. There's something about it....
God can surprise us and work above our expectation.
But there's something about your faith,
there's something about your expectation
that causes God to work in powerful ways.
When you expect to meet God in worship

you tend to meet God in worship.

These guys came and they expected to meet Jesus.

In *Matthew 2:2*

Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

If you raise your expectation.

If I raise my expectation to say Jesus is here.

I can meet with him.

He's got something to say to me.

He cares about me. He loves me.

There's something about that that changes everything.

If you look at all the people in this story

they all had different attitudes.

The wise men, they were expectant.

They expected Jesus to show up.

Herod – he was resistant. He didn't want Jesus to show up.

He was pushing back against it.

But the religious leaders.... They were indifferent.

They thought they knew it all

I've got to tell you something.

God can work a lot better with expectant and resistant people even than he can with indifferent people

Jesus one time said, I'd rather have you be hot or cold.

Don't be lukewarm or I'm going to spit you out of my mouth

These wise men teach us one of the main things you can do.

When these wise men came they asked a question.

That question helped them to find Jesus.

“Where is the one?”

One of the things you can do
to keep your attitude of expectancy going is ask God questions.
Ask God questions about your life?
Then you come to worship
and wait for him to answer in your life.

Questions like, Why is there evil in this world
and Why is this evil happening to me?
Questions like, How am I going to I find hope in this
circumstance?

So let's do this one together too.
What question do you need to ask God right now?
Ask him. He can handle it.

You ask him that question
and the answer is probably not going to
immediately flood into your mind. It might.
But over time as you worship
there will be a confidence about God's answer in that situation,

That's what the wise men teach us.
the third thing they teach us is

3. CHOOSE TO EXPRESS JOY.

You choose to express joy.
Joy happens when I make a choice.
I make a choice to trust God.
These wise men in

Matthew 2:10

“When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.”

They chose to express joy.

Actually the Greek word is literally they rejoiced with great joy, great exceedingly.

They openly expressed their joy.
And if you don't enjoy the love of Jesus Christ, you're not really connecting with him in worship.

Part of worship is connecting with him with the difficult, the hard questions of life. But part of it also has to be connecting with him with joy, the fact that he loves you, the fact that no matter what he has a plan for your life.

They didn't just have joy. They expressed it. There's something about expressing it.

Walking with the wise men there's a fourth thing they teach us.

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4. DECIDE TO HUMBLE YOURSELF.

When you decide to humble yourself
It's quite a moment in history
when these men showed up in Bethlehem
they bow before a baby..... What a moment!

In *Matthew 2:11*

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.”

They recognized they were in the presence of someone greater so they couldn't help it. They bowed down. They knew there was something greater here.

You and I when we worship
it's when we recognize that we're in the presence
of someone greater.
That is a very humbling thought.

God is God and I'm not. That's the greatness of God.
That means God is strong when I'm not.
God understands when I don't.
God never fails even though I do.
That's the greatness of God.

You may need to say yes to his forgiveness
You might need to say yes to some change in a relationship,
or a change in where you live,
or some decision in your life.

Whatever it is when you say yes to him
It's an action that hits your emotions in ways you don't expect.

All of a sudden you may feel tears welling up in your eyes.
You don't know why.
Or you feel this chill that goes up and down your spine.
Or you feel this wash of calmness or confidence

that comes over you.
What's happening is.....
you're connecting with God's greatness.
These wise men teach us a fifth thing about worship.

5. PLAN TO GIVE

You plan to give gifts.
They came but they planned in advance to give....
The most famous thing about these three wise men
or they may have been five
or they may have been two –
there may even have been a dozen
we're not sure how many there were
but we do know they gave three gifts.
These three gifts are famous
because they were part of the worship in their lives.

Worship is not just taking in.
Worship is also giving out.
It's also taking action.
In worship we receive from God
but we also give back to God and others.

So, in **Matthew 2:11**
*Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of
gold and of frankincense and of myrrh.*

They gave Him gold

They gave him gold.
That foreshadows the fact that Jesus is a king.

Because gold is a gift that was given to kings.
So they recognized him as a king
What does that mean for you and me?
When we think about what we're to give back to him.
It means you give him your best.
You give him the gold in your life.

You give him the best of yourself,
the best of your time,
the best of your resources,
the best of your abilities
because he gave for us.
That's a part of worship.

They gave Him frankincense

They also gave frankincense.
As they gave frankincense
they were recognizing Jesus as a priest.
In the temple worship of that day,
they used frankincense as a perfume
that went up before God in the sacrifices that were made.

Jesus is our priest.
A priest is a bridge builder,
someone who goes between God and man.
Jesus is the one who goes between God and us.
He stands between to bring us together
because of what he did for us on the cross
and at his resurrection.
He wants to bring us close to God. That's what Jesus does.

So, you give him your best.
But you also give him your worst.
You give him your sin and your guilt.
That may sound like a very strange gift.
But Jesus died on the cross to give you the gift of forgiveness.

Pray with me right now
I need your forgiveness Lord*I need your forgiveness.*
Recognize his forgiveness.

What better gift can you give Jesus at Christmas
than recognizing the gifts he gave to you?
The gift of his forgiveness.
You give him your best.
You give him your worst.

They also gave Him myrrh

In that myrrh they recognized him as Savior.
Myrrh was a spice that was used in the embalming of bodies.

So here even Jesus being a baby
we see this foreshadowing of his death.
The fact that one day he's going to give his life
for you and me so that we can be forgiven.
So that we can be saved from our sins.

What does that mean in our gift to him?
It means you give him your all.
Give him your best, give him your worst,
then give him your all.

He gave his all for you.
He gave his life for you so that you can have life again.

So, you give your all back to him.
These men brought to Jesus
something that cost them something.

That's part of worship.
You give him part of yourself.

What gift would you like to give Jesus this Christmas?

It may be the gift of recognizing his forgiveness.
It might be the gift of trusting him with a relationship
or a decision.
It might be the gift of recognizing a new habit in your life
What gift will you give Him?

As I say that what comes to your mind?
I'd like to give Jesus this....

There's one final thing that these wise men teach us to do.
And that is

6. YOU END WITH AN OBEDIENT RESPONSE

You do what God has said for you to do.
They met with God, God told them what to do next
and then they did what God told them to do.
It often happens that God tells us what to do next.

The next step to take in a relationship

or in a decision in our lives
When I do that..... I'm worshiping.

Worship happens even after the worship service,
the time we set aside for worship
when you do what God told us to do.

The Bible says in

Matthew 2:12

And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.”

Notice that: They went back by another route.

Here's something about worship:

Worship often changes the direction of your life,
You come in one way and you go out another way.

I've got to tell you when you trust him,
when you let him change your direction
and you act on what he said to do,
we can always expect some great results immediately.
But sometimes it takes time

So, what will you choose to do today with what you heard?

I love this next verse

1 Peter 2:9

“But you are the ones chosen by God . . . to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you.”

You're the ones chosen by God.
When you tell someone else, when you act on that,
that is an obedient step that changes not only your life
but somebody else's life.

This Christmas season is the season above all seasons
where people will come to church if asked

So, will you invite somebody next week?
Think of someone right now.....
A person's name has come into your mind
Invite that person. Just say, "Would you like to come?"

But I've got to tell you something.
There's a reason their name came to your mind.
God cares about them just like he cares about you.

And Now its your choice to obey or not.....

As we close
Would you pray with me?

Prayer
Altar Call